

Elimination of a Picture & its Subject —called The Fellers' Master Stroke

Half twelve, that's six, 'tis more
Perhaps, exact that's gone before
Behoves not here to say,
How many years away
Have welled up and flowed on
Slow passing till they're gone.

But some such time has fled
Since regular business led
To where a canvas glowed
With fays, a leafy node
Encircling wild about.
Their differences they let out
About an Indian boy,
Whom for a toy,
To while the time
Or teach to mime
Or verse in fairy tricks,
A mighty King his eyes did fix
Upon with covetous regard;
When met upon the sward,
Near Athen's learned seat
His Queen had set her feet

Thrice happy green ---business
Led, an official person to this sight
Who with the picture pleased
As 't'were a jewel bright,
His mind of burden eased,
To have the like
Of which did strike,
At fancy's shrine well meant.
If 't'was not so, then I may say
'T'was this perhaps, that went away
Some friend he had, who wrote in verse
About the fairies, sense as terse
As poets jam into a measured line
And gives such extra value I opine
To Heliconian jet so of his rhymes
Possessed, he wished to see

A little sketch, slight as may be
To illustrate the same —
Some stanzas shewed as game
Or point from which to throw

Sees nothing clearly, as his has
Blackly impositive and soon
Makes it as clear as sunny noon
That he has not —
Waiting this heavenly gift
I thought on nought — a shift
As good perhaps as thinking hard.
Fancy was not to be evoked
From her etherial realms
Or if so, then her purpose cloaked
And nuzzling the cloth, on which

The cloudy shades not rich,
Indefinite almost unseen
Lay vacant entities of chance,
Lent forms unto my careless glance
Without intent, pure fancy 'tis I mean
Design and composition thus –
Now minus and just here perhaps – plus -
Grew in this way – and so – or thus,
That fairly wrought they stand in view.
A fairy band, much as I say, just so
'tis true.

Part from the shades designed
Part a vain fancy, all inclined
A common end to gain
Of nothing something still
To stand before, the sight to fill

Something we have, having, we
Yet have not
Be it so or nay, why care a jot?
But there they are – and now
They stand a theme – a field to plough
And silent reap what any choose
Judiciously or not to lose.
All, the significance may give
They surely think in this doth live.
As Nature's Pages open spread
By erudite or fools are read,
To this one seems the world a den
While that a paradise in it doth ken
In the same place, 'tis lore
Preacquisite, the wise man's store
Gives off a value rich & full

To that sprung from a sense so dull
It does not half appreciate
Upon that which it doth dilate

Dilatory, dull, absorbing, rapt
In the sort of a kind of a –
something mapped
While struggling reason roams away
Nor will in such dull fetters stay
But leaves the author out of himself
To make his fame or gain his pelf
If so he may or can –
But to the common mind
The meaning thus, let's find –
For idle pastime hither led
Fays, gnomes, and elves and suchlike fled

To fix some dubious point to fairies only
Known to exist, or to the lonely
Thoughtful man recluse
Of power a potent spell to loose
Which binds the better slave to worse
Swindles soul, body, goods & purse
T'unlock the secret cells of dark abyss
The power which never doth its victim
miss

But may egorge when truth appears
When fail or guns or swords or spears
For some such end we may suppose
They've met since day hath made its close
Night's noon time haply extra bright
By fairie power made all so light
Doubtful if night or day might reign

To certain be in mind revolve again
And say that common nature is not true.
Precisely to what fairie opes to view
Comme ça for the effect, if you should
doubt.

If you've not been there, perhaps you
mought

Make a fresh bend; we'll now advance
These folk displayed as in a trance
Have not the dexter object here
But the same might be sinister
For saintly doubtless it is rare
To call a goblin elf, the lair
He loves, or any thing or sprite
That in the name of fairy doth delight
Or e'en the land itself

Laden with unimpossible wealth
To the mutton says Monsieur Crapaud
This meet unto the Patriarch owed
Say its conclave – and here to shew
His triple crown of subtle might
Weird in its form & shining bright
An arch magician whose large little club

Of some hard heavy wood is but a stubb
And might be loaded in its larger butt
Force to add when to use 'tis put
But even without no fairy skull
Resist it might however thick or dull
A little bit of wood just a mere twig
For which a plodding mortal less than a fig
Cares - but to an elf it has

A power as fatal as the Upas.
If on a sudden it descends
On fairy scone, its revel ends
And then you know poor little fart
Unto another private realm he will depart.
"Don't want to hurt poor little fa-er-ee"
Appeals the rogue unto the powers that be
The arch-fiend sees no dodge illicit
'Bout younker caught – is not explicit
Or he might say *"Don't let me catch
You here again
Or perhaps you'll meet with far too
Much sharp pain
And stunning effects the same to
Follow – which will not leave you
time to holloa!"* -----

Beneath his wide spread crown
He casts a glance adown
Dim vistãs of the pregnant coming bustle
To note if there is aught to stay or hustle
The incident peculiar here
Inciding edge incising clear
Or so to do.

His right hand raised, seems to declare
*“Except I tell you when, strike if you dare –
For all the powers of skill or chance
Fairies can use before my glance –
are bare”*

’Tis so – no doubt, but even Almighty
Power
Suffers defeat each day & every hour
As unforeseen some little trifling thing

Cheats of a stave another song we sing
His glance means likely too
If t'other is not much ado
He with one blow, another turn will serve
If from the aim's intent it doth not swerve
Left to its time & how to do
To split, for Mab perchance a chariot new.
'Tis all the skill there is for such a deed
Happen, happening in faerie for fairy's
need.

See – 'tis fay woodman holds aloft the axe
Whose double edge virtue now they tax
To do it single & make single double
Teatly and neatly – equal without trouble
'Tis not yet done – yet there he stands

Try if he'll do it – for your own commands
He knows the axe to use on fairy trees
And fairy common sense embodies if you
please

If that your fancy – you can strain so far.
As to suppose the same & yet not mar
Your mental method and decorum
Where all things shew them *quasi coram*
He's clothed in leather note from top to
toe.

All of one colour you may mark also.
The colour of his money you might say.
Good or bad adding lack-a-day.
How can I tell? –
Splitting is either good or bad
For not so the same terms are had.

And that's his money so to speak

Merely tho' 'tis about a freak.

As to the colour this we'll add

'Tis warm enough for fairy mad

But fairy leather comes from Victims
small.

Tho' if they're cattle fed in field or stall,

I know not – or bat's wings dyed to suit the
taste

But to the next one let us haste.

The ostler from the fairy inn

Knowing his air, the curate of the trim

Hands to his knees and body bent

On the nuts so tiny is all intent

With well spurred heel can ride amain

Stirrup or saddle seeks not to maintain
His seat the which so well he knows
Secure the *menage* that around him grows
That is a look of mastery as t'were to say
There is no dodge to me doth lay
Concealed where asses dogs or warmint
be,

I am a doctor veterinaree
They call me night or morn as't eve
Tom – price –
I know full well of beasts & in a trice
Your servant Sir your ass I'll groom
And shew you to the fairy inn's best room.
What are you at there? Steady ho!!! –
Do you think his gaze will help the blow. –
Next a dwarf monk with shaven crown

On the bank's brink hath cast adown
His wide sleeved arms & rests his chin
Partly his face his hands conceal –
I put him in –
For why? because I may reply
Monk's beatific mount they say on high.

But as historians do over
About their manners some demur
Checks the free access unto Heaven
And then, of that to speak with leaven
Of circumspection, unto a nether
Region they adhere.
Not holding on to it very tight I fear.
And where there is but little wine or beer.

Far wandering habits also 'tis well known
Led the same blades about from town to
town

And this with inns & sotlers too
Familiarly acquainted grew.

Says he's a rogue & to the next,
'Tis varhma's ploughman claims the text.

He has a twinkle in his eye
Bespeaks good humour you'll descry
Of cows & sheep & crops can talk
Quite wonderful & see him walk
With lounging stride across the fields
Just turned afresh to raise the crop that
yields.

Ample return for all his labour
That wants no sound of pipe & tabour.

His doubtful speech he hath addressed.
To Waggoner Will beside him lest.
The sage remark quite lost should be.
But how indifferent Will is – see!
Come hither! Woah is more to him.
Than such a speculative whim
Above Clod-hopper sits and like the sod –
He's brown in colour, also he's well shod.
A satyr's head has, buckles in his shoes.
Nurses one foot upon his knee amuse with
him
Yourself he's modern fay.
So gives his garb & decent sylvan he.
Is not stark naked & so proud might be
A foot and not a hoof to own.
But can he put a hat upon his crown?

His horns forbid – say that it slid
From off his pate & fell
Where! he nor I can tell!
There let it lie –
The Politician next, with senatorial pipe.
For argument or his opinion ripe.
A first chop Englishman at that sort of
chaff.

To hear him talk, Lord!
How 't'would make you laugh.
For fairy politics differ so very wide

From human governments complete
divide.

He's pondering matters now as if his vote
Ought to be given ere 'tis smote.

The nut – I mean –

Next him observe one clad in green.

An unknown character some fairy dandy.

Making a break as sweet as candy

To faery nymph like him so quaint.

They are poor ones clearly and attaint.

The present case, because 'tis queer,

And like themselves – yet no small beer.

They deem of their own station.

Behind them elves quite wide awake

Notes of the doings here to take

And to their fellows bye and bye

Tell all without a word of a lie.

Below a pedagogue appears.

A Critic up to sneers & jeers.

And by his faun-like ears he's wild

Untamed himself, each fairy child
He tames with many a look severe
But if his glance is there or here
'Tis hard to say. He squints to note

You may. But he'll not meddle
With a work so sharp.

Waits in suspense and doth not carp.

His business is to teach to do.

Do it himself? Oh no! t'is you.

Next come two wenches rather smart.

From lady's chamber where each art

Of fairy Luxury they the care,

At madam's need can well prepare.

This holds a mirror in her hand so tiny.

A magic surface polished bright & shiny.

While that a broom to sweep away.
The fairy rubbish lack-a-day
Holds in her left hand on her right
A favourite hawk moth doth alight.
They've got good legs and feet so small.
Bavaria Flanders Germany and all.
Can shew no more fantastic limb.
Critics are severe 'tis therefore that I beg.
You'll not inform that fay, that under the
leg
Of one of those maids, behind his back.
A satyr peeps; at what, it doth not lack,
An explanation.

At such a book,
His right to look,

I care not to dispute.

Such secrets surely some must know.

All are not saints on earth below.

Or if they are they know the same.

Or are shut out from nature's game.

Banished from nature's book of life,

Because some angel in the strife

Had got the worser fate.

And they close their eyes, that gate –

By which reminders enter.

And in a paradise of fools contented live.

Fays also are not saints, so I must believe

That this and similar frolics they achieve.

The truth is not for all you'll say.

But that eternal seal it bear,

One might say nay.

Who are the victims of that cruel fate
False secrecy, that sometimes 'tis too late
To find – lost to their race for ever they
In other spheres can understand the light
of day –

Next Lubin bending o'er his flame.

Chloe or Phyllis hard to tame.

With wooden sabots round about she'll
clatter.

Churn fairy butter or some such matter.

As to the dairy doth belong.

Whiling and charming time with song.

They're rustic Lovers rustic in manner.

And Lubin happen is a fairy tanner,

Tanned woodman's leather coat and cap,

His leggins, all their boots mayhap.

Except his sweethearts they are of wood.
He'd do them too to oblige her if he could.
They are curious in this business you see
plainly –

See also next below, two dwarfs –
ungainly?

No for the sake of rhyme it fits so well –
We'll write it down – and after tell
That 'tis deformity approaches near
The truth about this couple here.

A fairy conjuror he who knows a trick
Or two at cards and in the nick –
Of time, can well deceive.

Thus, of your reason you take leave.
Then 'tis that he will do the clever dodge.
Which puzzles many a clownish varhma

Hodge.

You think perhaps you don't do so.

The prayer book so affirms I know –

Just now he offers out to let –

'T'will or 't'will not be surely split.

Some odds perhaps will give

What fairy coin is – true as I live.

I can't inform – nor if they betted

And if they did, the profits netted

The spider near. His web hath left.

Drops down upon them from some cleft

Where he spread his wide snare for game

One that detains yet doth not maim

Perhaps he's an offer when they have

done.

To supply with gossamer wells all, every
one.

A master weaver he in whose employ
The lesser spinners may enjoy
Profits & learn to make account
Of those who wish aloft to mount.

And sail away upon the wind
From Europe p'raps to furthest Ind.
They've only wind to ask for – 'tis the
weather

That in this case saves the expense of
leather

And pilgrimages – let's make one
To the opposite side – That is, objection
If you've none – Two braves we see –
In gallantry – Who by their wits can live –

Can sing or play – Fight, run away,
Or entertainment give.

Your fairy man upon the town.

That can clean out a swell or clown.

And if there's need can let you down –

A peg or two – so high they fly.

Hawking while talking all my eye –

Next to the Patriarch's

Crown attend. And mark the motes

That there descend.

Dancing and singing there they go

With their *fal lal the rah* and *huy gee wohe*.

The dress is Spanish 'tis in use,

At present time If I abuse,

Not memory of the source

From which I borrowed them of course
Call cottagers, no bloods are, these;
As on a tight rope they to please.

I represented – when in the play
One is dressed like to Duvernay.

Balancing these on the other side
Queen Mab in Car of state doth ride.

Some atomies the poet says did draw
A gnat gives to them coachman's law
I never saw the famed Queen Mab or
might.

Had it been so contributed delight.

The atomies are, no doubt, a dubious
theme.

Like tiny female centaurs here do seem.
Half beast & half a woman yoked are.

With wings to soar away in regions far.
Under the coachman standing nigh
Two little pages you may spy.
Cupid & Psyche they enact,
Fairies no doubt possess the tact
To imitate like mortal players

I know not if at theatres or fairs.
It needs must be so –
Fairies 'tis said shun all display
And most affect the pale moon's ray
Sol's potent ray soon drives them off
He'd instant find whereat to spurn and
scoff –

Just so it was with folk in olden time,
Whose practices were held to be a crime.

They fled the powers that held despotic
sway –

Poor little fairies! why not also they?

Fancy this pair aught else 't'will do,

But male and female they are plain to view

Next to the Queen you here behind may
count,

Some strapping fairy footmen mount

And *garde chemin* no doubt they well do
serve.

Tiny in size but lusty in the nerve,

As every footman should be –

Above in attitude of fondest love

King Oberon & his Queen approve

The sport else why should they repair

To this sequestered spot the same to

share

Merely perhaps to note the way things
went.

And how many chops were useless made
anent.

Pulling of straws out from a stack of
wheat.

Is for a pastime not more meet.

And such the Old Lady in the Scarlet Cloak,
Might non-be fancying true – no joke.

Is it true for me or even you –

True if you care not – this is true.

Her nose and chin will never crack

The monster nuts & many a whack

From club or shining axe will want

Ere the chance fatal lights upon't
Above the harridan some whose names
Serve schoolboys turn when at their
games

They of the future calling prophecy
With boisterous laugh and ecstasy
Of childish mirth, nor want they
Perhaps a forced imposed belief.

In soldier and sailor, tinker or tailor
Ploughboy, apothecary, thief.

Counting their buttons down the vest.

A name to each – the last doth rest

The faded rade – soon from the thoughts
'tis laid

Aside and fairy prophecy forgot.

Here let me say my let of this same lot –

The ragged soldier sure is mad.
Made so by wounds, debauch and glad
But hard earned victory
Being fay, I've not the history.
I made it so but not from spite,
Else he'd find reason to requite
But ragamuffins to enlist.
He's a brave spirit to assist.

Knows when he does he'll be Commander
The chief one or a Salamander.
A real fire eater like the Sun
By his own bravery surely won.
The sailor keeps a pleasure yacht
Has nought to do but live on what
The smiling elements that never frown

Freely disclose as up and down
For pleasure merely roam about
The fleets of vessels of which he'll take
Entire command for the nation's sake,
Nor cares he where to move or swim.
'Till death commands to drowse the glim.
Some other oceans then he'll try,
Rolling eternal in the sky –
The tinker next with barrow trig
Knows every wandering gypsy rig
Where does he lodge? 'tis hard to say
Whether a house or stack of hay
Serves the poor outcast for his rest
He's butt howe'er for many a jest
Lives in a world of nether pose
Mysterious obscure, your senses lose

Or cast aside as nothing worth
Nor length it has nor breadth or girth
Just now he marks the filbert big
Stript of its natural russet wig
How would he here his skill to prove?

He'd grind it p'raps? Not so by Jove
Clumsily skilful though he be
He knows too much for that d'ye see
Around the fairy villages he'll stray
Knives scissors to grind might bawl each
day.

Knows well the tailor reg'lar grinds his
shears.

Ah! That's a tailor brave that knows no
fears.

Nine fairy tailors would not make a man
Tho' they might queer him, you know well
they can.

But this one seems disposed to queer,
The plough-boy that is standing to him
near

Shews him a coat neat made and very
strong

'T'would last the lad his fairy life time long.

But while he doubts the same to buy,

The Thief his craft on him doth try.

Loosens his handkerchief so gay.

Too artful he to snatch away.

The doctor in his thoughts reserved.

The trick below hath not observed

But with his sounding pestle beats,

The drugs that he to fairy metes.
His mortar would not hold the nut.
But holds enough for fairy gut.
A nostrum or a panacea
At any price we'll say not dear.
Next to the Soldier on his right,
a Dragon Fly exerts his skill & might

Sounds the long notes 'long the long tube
that wind
And in the fairy hollows echoes find.
To assist this gaudy long legged trumpeter
A tattered demalion & a junketer
Holiday folk that tends upon,
Like a Postilion if you con
Each blows his brazen tube no doubt in

tune

With Dragon Fly that rests his leg abune

The jutting stone on which they sit

Expecting company that soon will flit

Slanting along the Lunar ray

Like boys & girls come out to play –

Alow behind these last-named two

An elfin takes a peeping view –

Not at the nut but the spectator

Happen to mark if arbitrator

He in this remarkable fudge

Or humbug gives the fatal nudge.

Peeper is wildest of the crew

Cares nought for them or I or you.

You from his cap with me perchance agree

Of the Chinese small Foot Societee,

He's a small member.
But if Confucius sent him
Now I can't remember.


Turn to the Patriarch & behold
Long pendants from his crown are rolled,
In winding figures circle round
The grass and such upon the mound,
They represent vagary wild
And mental aberration styled.
Now unto nature clinging close
Now wildly out away they toss,
Like a cyclone uncontroll'd
Sweeping around with chance-born fold
Unto the picture brings a grace
Which else was wanting to its face

But tied at length unto a stem
Shews or should do *finitam rem* –
The size the nuts do here display
Forgive nor make me forfeit pay
Having the benefit of doubt
Of what the fairies grow without
The reach of human ken or will
And needs not now that I instil
Into your mind.

What here I've said from fancy's wing
A sense supporting of my need
You may deny – say – no such thing
'Tis all wrong every bit indeed.
Well! to your judgment I must bow
Freely it's exercise allow
You perhaps to such are more inured.

Your notions may be more endured
But whether it be or be not so
You can afford to let this go
For nought as nothing it explains
And nothing from nothing nothing gains.

R^d Dadd. Broadmoor, Jan 1865

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